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PUNCH

OR
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CXC VII No. 5146

November 15 1939

Charivaria

"NATURE can show business men how to run things," says a naturalist. But we don't think much of her loose-leaf system.

Camouflage

"Men are wearing more hats than they ever did," she told me.—*Daily Mail*.



Dr. GOEBBELS tells Germans that to eat less food will be good for them. That's just what mothers used to say about castor oil—and they never tried it either.

A man stated in court that a domestic servant he had occasion to rebuke went vengefully into the garden afterwards and completely wrecked his

A.R.P. shelter. It was only bomb-proof of course.

It has been estimated that there are ten main causes of unprovoked aggression. Chief among them being the conviction that you can lick the other fellow.

When a member of the Auxiliary Fire Service was married in London recently his comrades turned out and made a triumphal arch for him. There was no escape.

An essayist reminds us that history inevitably repeats itself in international affairs. It needn't have done in the case of the Great War; we heard it the first time.

It was stated in court that a burglar had tried to break into twenty-five houses in a week. It is thought that if he hadn't been caught he would have tried to sell his practice.

"WANTED A HOME
HALF BULL-MASTIFF"
"Our Dogs."

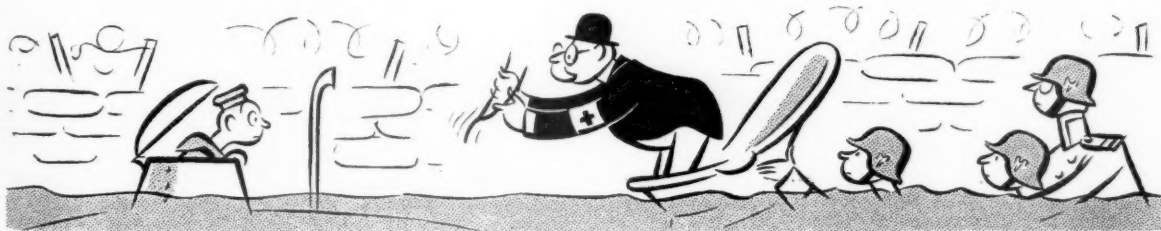
Front or back?



A correspondent complains that his railway carriage was so crowded that he could not open the window. The fact that a railway carriage is crowded has nothing to do with the window not opening.

Mr. MIDDLETON is to appear in a film. It is not stated whether he helped to dig up a new plot.

There is a rumour that one of the water diviners sent to the Siegfried Line found some truth at the bottom of a well.





"The Germans have evidently started a new sort of propaganda, Maud."

Uncle Thomas and the Washhouse Chimney

WHENEVER my Uncle Thomas had been visiting us something dreadful happened. He was a man who went through life presaging the most woeful calamities, and while my father was taking steps to prevent them they generally occurred.

Once when he was with us he drew my mother's attention to the bough of a tree overhanging the house, and declared that it was rotten. He said that it was liable to come down at any moment, and that when it did so it would probably crash through the roof and kill us all in our beds. If there was one thing that alarmed my mother it was the thought of something crashing through the roof and killing us all in our beds. She liked to feel that we were safe in our beds, because she feared that we were none of us safe anywhere else.

So when my Uncle Thomas had gone home my mother persuaded my father to attack the threatening bough with a saw. My Uncle Thomas was quite right. The bough came down with a crash when my father sat on it and sawed it off. He sustained severe concussion and was unconscious for some hours.

But my most vivid memory of an event accurately presaged by my Uncle Thomas was the affair of the washhouse chimney. I was nine at the time,

I believe, and at an age to revel in the misfortunes of others. Moreover I was on this occasion an eyewitness of the proceedings, and so can vouch for them.

On this visit my Uncle Thomas had paid particular attention to the washhouse chimney. We still called it the washhouse, although it had long since been superseded and was now used as a kennel for four Irish setters. It had a copper with a most peculiar chimney—a tall wide one, rather like a factory chimney except that it was oblong instead of round. It rose high above the roof of the washhouse, and was certainly in a state of decay. Uncle Thomas told my mother that it was dangerously unsound. He said that the mortar had all wasted away and that at any moment two or three thousand bricks were likely to fall on the head of anyone happening to stand underneath.

At first my mother took no notice of him, but he repeated his prophecy every day while he was with us, and the seeds of mistrust were sown.

Soon after Uncle Thomas had gone, my mother asked my father whether he thought he could do anything about pulling down the washhouse chimney. My father wasn't sure. He rather thought that one knocked some bricks out of the bottom of a chimney and then tied a rope around the top and

pulled. My elder brother Jim said that you used dynamite. When he found that no one was proposing to use dynamite he took no further interest in the matter. Indeed on the day when the chimney was tackled he went out rook-shooting in the morning and knew nothing about it until it was nearly over.

But these were preliminary discussions and were academic rather than practical. They served the purpose that my mother meant them to serve—of fixing it in my father's head that something had to be done about the washhouse chimney. It also fixed it in the heads of my younger brother Henry and me that, whatever was done about the washhouse chimney, we were going to be there to watch.

Nothing more happened until a friend of my father's, a Mr. Whiffen, came for the week-end. He was a large mild man who wrote books on philosophy and was the last sort of person one would expect to find knocking down washhouse chimneys. But as soon as he appeared my mother determined to assign him a part in the drama. All day on Saturday she worked on him, and on Sunday the stage was set.

The general plan was to attack the chimney from the top, and my father intended that he and Mr. Whiffen should take it in turns to clamber up and knock bits off. My mother would not hear of this. She had had one experience of my father's capacity for working at a height, and she had no greater faith in Mr. Whiffen's. Only one of them was to go to the top of the chimney, and he was to have a rope tied round his waist. The rope was to be passed over the bough of a nearby tree and the other end anchored by the man on the ground. If the man at the top fell off he would be lowered gently to the ground by the man at the bottom. This excellent precaution was praised by all, and Mr. Whiffen volunteered to do the clambering.

So, at three o'clock on a Sunday afternoon, with my elder brother Jim away shooting rooks and the four Irish setters safely locked in the washhouse where they could not interfere with proceedings, my mother, my father, my younger brother Henry and I watched the stout Mr. Whiffen clamber on to the top of the washhouse chimney.

He reached it without mishap—it was really quite an easy climb—and my father then threw the rope over the bough, and it landed on the washhouse roof so that Mr. Whiffen had to climb down to the roof, pick it up and then climb up again. There, poised on the washhouse chimney and silhouetted



"Why on earth not? They're my own initials."

against a clear sky, he tied the rope round his waist while my father tied the other end round his waist and prepared to take the shock of any sudden fall.

Suddenly, Mr. Whiffen vanished into thin air. At one moment he was there, stout and solid in silhouette; at the next he had gone without a sound. For a few seconds we could only stare dumbfounded. Then my mother realised that Mr. Whiffen had fallen down the chimney, and turned to tell my father to haul him up. But my father had gone too.

At this moment two different cries reached our ears—the shouts of my father asking to be cut down and the muffled tones of Mr. Whiffen asking to be hauled up. Within a few seconds there was uproar. My younger brother Henry became hysterical, I started yelling for help, my mother shouted to us both to go indoors so that we should not see our poor father hang, and the four red setters, hearing something strange in the washhouse chimney, set up the most dismal howling. As all this was going on, my elder brother Jim came back from his rook-shooting.

When he saw my father suspended from the bough of the tree and heard us all calling out, my elder brother Jim immediately concluded that my father was trying to hang himself in front of his family. Having been away all day, he knew nothing of the presence of the unfortunate Mr. Whiffen in the chimney. His one thought was to get my father down

with the utmost dispatch. Accordingly he began firing off his rook rifle, aiming at the rope which he could observe stretched out on the other side of the bough. Despite my father's agonised entreaties, he persisted until he had severed the rope and my father fell at his feet, badly spraining his ankle.

We were all so overjoyed to find my father alive, although injured, that none of us gave a thought to Mr. Whiffen until appeals for help and a tremendous noise of dogs reached us from the washhouse. Rushing to the

door we unlocked it, and Mr. Whiffen fell out, pursued by four Irish setters intent on savaging the man who had entered their home in this unorthodox way.

Luckily Mr. Whiffen was only scratched and bruised and very dirty, but he caught an earlier train than he had intended, and never returned.

The washhouse chimney is still there. The last time my Uncle Thomas was over he looked at it gloomily and said that it would cause some terrible accident one of these days.

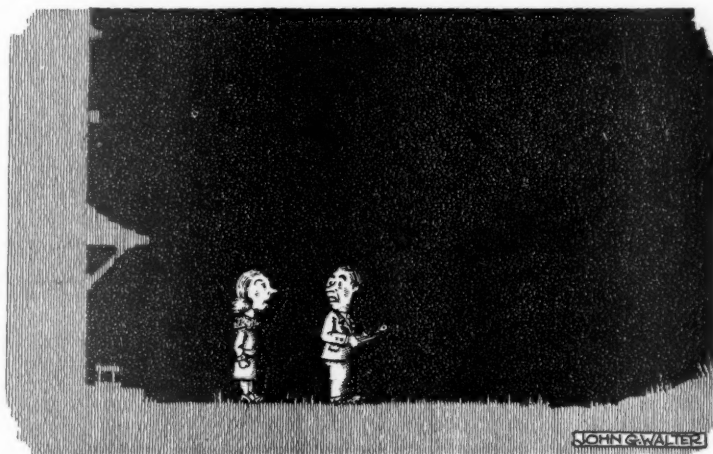
Continuity

WHILST we lament such evil coil
As now profanes the hill,
This heathen turning of our soil
For harvest of bad will,

The thoughtless pick lays bare the stone
Of long-abandoned posts,
From which the singing flint has flown
Upon the charging hosts.

The hidden trenches that we make
Show hidden paths beneath;
No virgin is the turf we break
To grow our wisdom teeth.

The harsh emplacement in the wood
Takes tribute for these lands.
Know, lovers of the neighbourhood,
Who raise protesting hands,
The slingers of a legion stood
Where that three-seven stands.



"WELL, IT WAS YOUR IDEA TO HAVE A BLACK CAT!"

Ardent Admirer in Lambeth

THERE was a fierce ring at the door of 61, Cosham House, Lambeth. Mr. Joseph Pinkin, who was having his customary after-supper nap—"I jus' sit in the chair an' drop orf," was his way of describing it—woke reluctantly. "Sounds like as if there's someone at the door," he said.

Mr. Pinkin, Jr., who, although awake, had been giving his senses a rest, listened retrospectively. "Yerse," he said, "it do."

From a bedroom came the gimlet-like voice of Miss Tillie Pinkin. "Door!" she shouted. "Someone at it."

"She's noticed it too," said Mr. Pinkin. "I'll go."

"No, I'll go," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr. "Don't you worry, Pa."

"Sno worry, Perce," Mr. Pinkin said. "None whatever. O' course if you speshly want ter go I'm not the one ter stand in your way."

"Jus' as you like, Pa," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr. "I on'y offered in case you wasn't keen."

"I'm not keen," said Mr. Pinkin, "but I don't mind, if you see what I mean."

Mrs. Pinkin passed the living-room on her way from the kitchen to the front-door. "Send me a poce-card when you've made up yer minds," she shouted. She added that if some people would on'y say they was riveted to their seats it would simplify matters considerable.

The caller was Mr. Sidney Puckle. "'Evenin', Mrs. P.," he said, fingering his Old Etonian tie. "It's me. I'm expected."

"Quite right both times," Mrs. Pinkin said. "Come on in."

"Is that Sid?" Tillie shouted.

"Yerse," said Mr. Puckle. "'Ow are you?"

"Fine, thanks!" Tillie shouted. "'Ow are you?"

"Fine, thanks!" said Mr. Puckle.

"Fine!" Tillie shouted.

Mr. Pinkin, Jr., came into the hall. "Seems to 'ave kep' fine for ev'rybody, don't it, Sid?" he said acidly. "If you'll leave strokin' the door-'andle I'll fermay la port. There's a draught fit ter cut Goebbles's leg orf if 'e 'ad one ter stand on."

"Sorry I can't laugh," said Mr. Puckle. "I've strained me tear-duc's already listenin' to 'Amburg before I come out. Reckon I know what 'Itler's noo untried weapon is."

"Wot?" said Mr. Pinkin, Jr.

"The truth," said Mr. Puckle. "If ever 'e starts tellin' it we'll all drop dead wiv surprise." He followed Mr. Pinkin, Jr., into the living-room. "'Evenin', Mr. Pinkin," he said.

Mr. Pinkin opened one eye. "I wuz asleep," he said.

"Sorry," said Mr. Puckle. "I mean, sorry I woke you. I was invited, though."

"Oh," said Mr. Pinkin. "Pity you couldn't 'ave come a coupla minutes later. I wuz jus' in the middle of a lovely dream. I dunno where I wuz or what I wuz doin', but I do know Mrs. P. wasn't there."

The door opened and Miss Tillie Pinkin sauntered in. She usually dressed to kill, but this evening she was arrayed for a second Massacre of Glencoe at least. She smiled her favourite Inscrutable Smile of a Beautiful Spy and extended an off-white hand towards Mr. Puckle. "'Evenin', Sid," she said.

"Coo!" said Mr. Puckle. "You're stunnin'."

"Yerse," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr., "dropped from orf of a 'igh buildin' she'd knock you abserloutly flat."

Tillie turned her back on her brother and shone the full

wattage of her electric personality at Mr. Puckle. "Sure you wouldn't rather 'ave gorn to the pitchers?" she said.

"No," said Mr. Puckle. "I wouldn't rather 'ave unless you wouldn't rather 'ave. Not but what I could afford it, though. I don't gamble an' I never drink too much."

"No one never does," said Mr. Pinkin. "Still, we all gotta 'ave some vice, I s'pose."

Tillie stamped her foot. "Vice my eye!" she shouted. "I'd 'ave you know I'm alwers well-be'aved an' imminently respectable."

"Trumpeter, what are you soundin' now?" said Mr. Pinkin, Jr.

Miss Tillie Pinkin observed that if a lady couldn't ruddy well 'ave a gentleman friend in of an evenin' wivout 'avin' insalts flyin' round like dooce don't know what all, she'd 'ave to lower 'er dignity by raisin' 'er 'and against someone. Mr. Pinkin, Jr., said the trouble was that when you pulled some people's legs they jus' come away in your 'and.

"Tchah!" Tillie said.

Mr. Puckle said he quite agreed, he did reely.

Mrs. Pinkin came into the room. "Letter for you, Tillie," she said.

"For me?" Tillie said. "Wonder 'oo it can be from?"

Mrs. Pinkin remarked that one way of tellin' would be to open it, and returned to the kitchen.

Tillie read the letter rapidly. "Coo, I say!" she said. "'Ow very romantic!"

"Wot is?" said Mr. Puckle anxiously.

"This letter," Tillie said. "It's from a admirer."

"Show us," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr., "go on!"

"It's a privit letter," Tillie said.

"Course it is!" said Mr. Pinkin, Jr. "All letters is privit letters. Public letters is poce-cards. Sid 'as a kinda right to know 'oo it's from, so to save 'im the trouble I'll read it out loud." He snatched the letter and read:

"Fridy, 10th inst.

My Darling Miss Pinkin,—In spite of not having had a intro to you I hope you won't think this anomalous letter is a bit of sauce because I think your the worlds top girl bar none. Every time I come to the dairy for a ½pt milk or ¼lb salted empire and you say, Will there be anythink further? I always want to say, I doo hope so Miss Pinkin, but do not say it in case you think me overbold which I would not wish you to think on any acct because I am not, not at all. I have got a good job and am saveing hard so as when I am in a position to ask you to marry me I can ask you to marry me. I am triffically in love with you which I hope you will be with me when you know who I am which I hope you soon will do.

Yours filly,

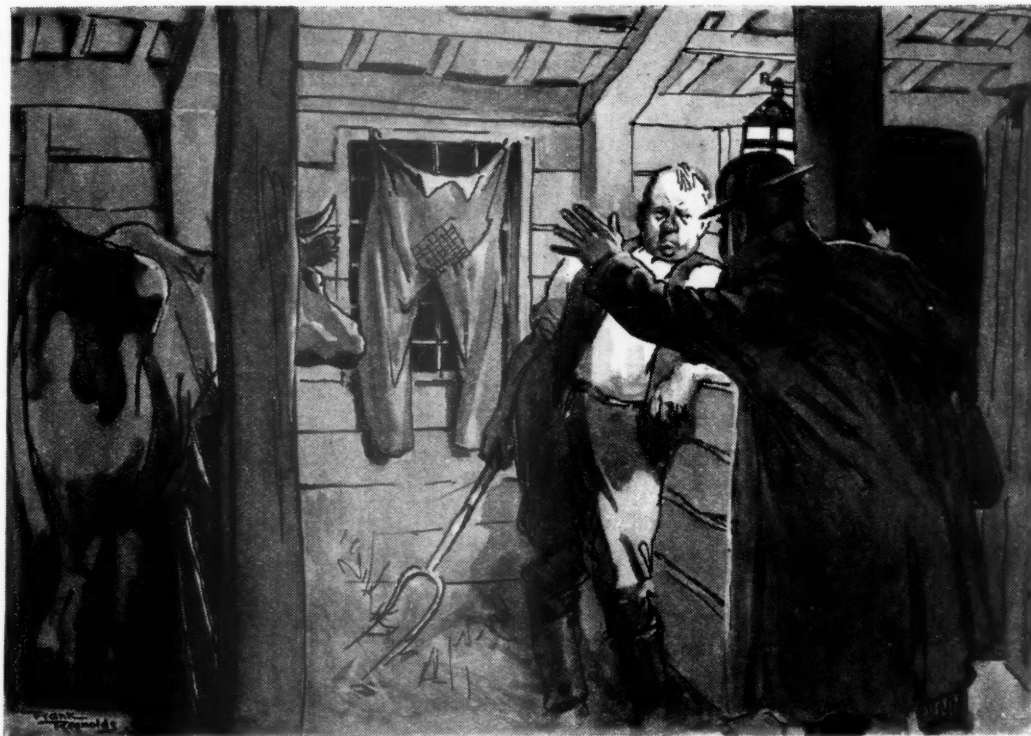
A Ardent Admirer."

Mr. Puckle bit his lip and announced that he had bin knocked all of a 'eap. "Anyidea 'oo it is?" he said. "Because if so—"

"I think I c'd narrer it down to four," Tillie said. "There's a distingey-lookin' feller 'oo's alwers payin' me supple compliments. There's a feller 'oo alwers says 'e's glad I'm not lanky because 'is idea of a 'appy marriage is a short wife but a gay one. There's—"

"Seems a pity when you've got such a nice nose, Sid," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr., "to 'ave it put outa joint."

"Sall very well you laughin'," said Mr. Puckle. "You don't know what love is."



"'Tis summat, Jan, but it baint perfect!"

"I never bin in prison, neither," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr., "but I got enough savvy to keep out of it."

"This feller can't 'ave 'ad no edjooation," said Mr. Puckle. "Look 'ow 'e spells 'triffically.'"

"It ain't spellin' as counts," Tillie said. "It's sentiment. 'E calls me 'Darling,' to show 'is passion, an' 'Miss Pinkin' to show 'is respec', 'e's savin' 'ard an' 'e wants ter marry me. 'E's the firs' feller 'oo's took me serious."

"'Im," said Mr. Puckle, "an' me."

"You, Sidderney?" Tillie said.

"Yerse," said Mr. Puckle. "I think you're wonderful an' I'll save like 'ell if on'y you'll say you'll be Mrs. Puckle in doo course."

"D'you mean that?" Tillie said.

"'E mus' do," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr., "'seein' as 'e's said it in front of a coupla 'efty witnisses. I warn you now, Sid, if you wants to 'ug you'll 'ave to 'ug in the 'all, because any display of affection lovinger than a straight lef' makes me feel kinda sick."

"Why didn't you say so before?" Tillie said to Mr. Puckle when she had escorted him into the hall.

"Dunno," said Mr. Puckle. "Somethin' 'eld me back. Persykerlogicle, I s'pose. It wanted somethin' like this to get me goin'. You won't 'ave nothin' to do wiv this 'ere unknown Romayo, will you?"

"Course not!" Tillie said. "I'm goin' to tear 'is letter up an' keep the bits so as we c'n use 'em for confetti."

That's one-an'-six we've saved already by not goin' to the pitchers."

The "we" striking at Mr. Puckle's hitherto bachelor heart made him shiver, but in his innocence he attributed it only to the draught.

Just before she went to bed that night Tillie went into her brother's room. "Perce," she said, "'ow do you spell 'triffically'?"

"One F an' two Cs of course," said Mr. Pinkin, Jr.

"Why?"

"I jus' wondered, that's all," Tillie said. "Y'know, it looked kinda wrong some'ow when I wrote it las' night."

o o

London Nocturne

TO-NIGHT is a perfect night for lovers.

There is a moon and stars,

No noise, no street lights

Jupiter, Venus and Mars.

Thus it seems a pity for every wife,

For every sweetheart and mother,

That all the men should be in one place

And all the women in another. V. G.

Investigations of Hector Tumbler

Watertight's Secret

"CHARLES PINWRIGHT, by all that's wonderful!" I looked up with a start at hearing my own name thus unexpectedly spoken in the crowded restaurant. There before me stood Dick Birdcage, the dearest friend of my youth, whom I had not seen for twenty years.

During that moment when I gazed into Dick's piercing blue eyes and felt every bone in my right hand crack within his cordial grasp, I seemed to relive the past. I saw us two at school together; again I lived through those happy holidays I spent as Dick's guest at Birdcage Hall; I saw us two go up to Oxford together, and after a brief interval return to school together. Then I sighed and returned to the present; for as we chatted together of this and that I became aware that Dick was not altogether the man he had been. Some indefinable trouble seemed to be burdening his soul.

"So your father died six months ago?" I said, hoping to draw him out. "And now you're Squire Birdcage?" I added laughingly.

To my surprise he sighed bitterly. "I don't know," he said. "That's the trouble. You see, Father's will was never found. We don't know who owns the Hall, and until the will's found we never shall know. The whole family's living at the Hall now. We spend all our time looking for the will, but it seems hopeless." He relapsed into gloomy silence.

"But have you no clue?" I asked.

He laughed. "Oh, yes. Father's last words before he died were, 'My will. Ask Watertight.' You remember Watertight?"

As if I could ever forget Watertight! Though it was twenty years since I had seen him, the figure of the old butler, model of all that a butler should be, seemed to stand before me as clearly as though I had never seen him at all.

"Well," said Dick, "we asked Watertight. We went on asking Watertight. But Watertight declares he knows nothing about it. Obviously the old man must have been rambling."

"There's only one man who can help you," I said gravely. "Hector Tumbler!"

Dick Birdcage eyed me dully, but I did not wait. In less time than it took to leave the restaurant I had led him out into the street. We found Tumbler at home, methodically stowing away cold sausages into a long envelope. He looked up from his work with a low roar of laughter. While Dick Birdcage told his story he read a newspaper ostentatiously. But it was obvious to one who knew him that he had not heard a word.

Tumbler was a man of quick decisions. An hour later, in Dick's high-powered car, we had already covered half the distance between London and Birdcage Hall.

EVEN as we entered the park and saw the rambling old house in the distance, completely hidden from view by its grove of ancient elms, we had evidence of the truth of Dick's story. Here and there were parties of his relatives, some digging methodically, others taking surveys with tape-measures and spirit-levels. The lake, in whose placid waters Dick and I had so often in happier days attempted to drown Handlebar, the aged head-gardener, was drained. Before the very doorway of the house gaped an enormous pit which Dick's five younger brothers were even now excavating.

The door was opened by the portly figure of Watertight himself, ponderous and impeccable as ever, his face creased in a slightly sardonic smile. How my mind wandered in regions of the past at the very sight of him! And yet there was a difference somewhere. What was it? As he showed me upstairs to my room, I tried to think. Suddenly I started. Watertight was whistling jauntily between his teeth! Presently he produced a mouth-organ and gave a spirited though inaccurate rendering of the "William Tell" Overture. Could such a thing have happened in the old days? I could hardly believe it. With deprecating efficiency he laid out my evening clothes on the floor and trampled on them.

"I trust that will be all, Sir?" he said deferentially. And before I could recover from my astonishment or make any reply he had wrenched the door quietly off its hinges and was gone.

Yes, there was a difference somewhere. Could it be that Watertight, conscious that the secret of the will reposed in him alone, was presuming on his position? I had sunk into a reverie when there was a tap at the door and Tumbler entered. His face was much blackened with soot, and a picture-frame hung round his neck. It was not difficult to see the hand of Watertight in this latest outrage, and Tumbler himself soon confirmed my conjecture.

"What does it all mean?" I asked.

"It means," said Tumbler grimly, "that Watertight has the secret of the will, and he knows it. The only question is: Can he be made to give it up? We shall see."

PRESENTLY we went down to dinner. The oak-panelled dining-room of Birdcage Hall can seldom have witnessed a more animated scene as the glimmering of a hundred candles showed three generations of Birdcages fighting for their places at table. Between them all there existed a strange unseizable resemblance; and yet, though they all looked exactly alike and said exactly the same things, it would have been difficult to say precisely where the resemblance lay. In the background lurked Watertight, wearing a black felt hat and smoking a large curly pipe.

He began to serve the soup, pouring the contents of each plate methodically down the neck of each guest in turn. In fascinated horror I watched him approach the place where Tumbler was sitting. Would the great detective submit to this final indignity?

And now the fatal plate was lifted, slowly it was tilted towards Tumbler's neck. But that dreadful baptism was not to be. Like a flash, Tumbler sprang up. With one blow he sent the butler's hat spinning to the floor, then, as Watertight stooped to retrieve it, splash! went the soup over his shining bald head. There was a gasp of horror which changed to astonishment as large purple letters started into view on the discoloured surface. This is what we read: "The last will and testament of Simon Birdcage will be found in the second volume of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*."

Leaving the discomfited Watertight behind, the mob of relatives surged towards the library. Amid dead silence Tumbler took down the bulky volume. A single sheet of paper fluttered to the ground. Tumbler picked it up. It was perfectly blank.

"Invisible ink again," he muttered. "And there's no more soup left," he said, crestfallen for a moment. Then

an idea seemed to strike him. He held the mysterious paper close to the fire, while we crowded round impatiently.

What happened next I shall never clearly know. Perhaps the detective's attention wandered for a moment. Perhaps he was asleep. Perhaps he lost his hold on the paper. One thing is certain. The will fell into the fire and in a second was burnt to ashes.

HUMAN ingratitude, particularly when its victim is a man of genius, can be a fiendish thing. Even now, when I think of the brief remainder of our stay at Birdcage Hall I cannot suppress a shudder.

Sunt Lacrimæ . . .

IT'S in Ireland I would be now, in the sound of the Atlantic,

Staying at the pub in the soft Kerry fields;
Listening to the Kerry brogue—the softest, most romantic,
Suddenest, most smiling brogue that Ireland yields.

This has been my holiday, treasured till November,
Stored through the dog-days, year after year;
Lovely to anticipate, lovely to remember,
Lovelier than either when the days are here.

It's there I would be now, polishing the barrel
Of my old twelve-bore against the morning flight;

Laying out my warmest items of apparel
(Ready for the morning) the previous night.

Hearing in the darkness the bacon-rashers sizzle,
Swallowing a cup or two of hot sweet tea;
Out thigh-booted, where the soft rain-drizzle
Dances in the headlights. And off to the sea!

Warmth in the breathing of the old black retriever
Lying on the game-bag, nose against the gun.
Both of us seem calm, but both are in a fever
Of hope that the flight is a successful one.

Stopping at the roadside, lights out, listening;
Pocketing the cartridges, slinging on the bag;
Torch-flashes show the raindrops glistening.
They'll be late this morning. What'll be the swag?

Waiting for the light now; sudden flocks of
curlews

Gibber past invisible, and snipe complain.
Settled in a gillcock; all the darkened purlieus
Shriek to the passing of a distant train.

Wings are whistling, widgeon going over;
Half-tone streaks in the eastern sky . . .
Call me a clown? I'm a clown in clover!
You take Switzerland, Ireland I!

Back again to breakfast; this has earned a second!
A bath and a change, and we're off again.
Out to the car. O'Halloran has reckoned
To be in the hills by a quarter to ten.

Cock in the snow-shagged hillside covers,
Snipe in the bogs and grouse in the peat.
Partridges perhaps, and the piping golden plovers,
And a pheasant, if you're lucky, may arise at your feet.

Mallard in the gillcocks, teal on the splashes,
Water in the thigh-boots, lunch in the car;
A pipe in the hedgerow and, knocking out the ashes,
A drive to the fields where the grey geese are.

Wild goose chases—and the phrase has meaning
(My score is ten in as many years!) . . .
The evening flight with the darkness screening
The last wise birds till the moon appears.

Waiting for the geese in the moonlight maybe,
But probably back to the pub to dine;
Tottering to bed and to sleep like a baby,
With the clock-hands pointing to half-past nine.

* * * * *

Days on the foreshore, days in the heather,
Days at Ballyheigue or in Ventry Bay.
Days in the sun or in piercing weather . . .
Days of the perfect holiday!

It's in Ireland I would be now, in the sound of the Atlantic,
Ankle-deep in the Kerry scene.
But this year it's off, as, somewhat less romantic,
I'm gunning on the seas after submarine.



"Funny thing, I know that fellow's face."

At the Pictures

FOUR MORE DAUGHTERS

It's odd to find what might be called the comic-strip convention being used for quite serious films. You know those newspaper strips dealing with the adventures of one or two main characters, who may be captains of industry one day, tramps the next, in the army the third, without annoying readers by the lack of continuity? The same thing is often done with film comedies of course: the line of LAUREL and HARDY pictures is studded with different *Mrs. Hardys* and *Mrs. Laurels*; but I don't at the moment recall any example among serious films except *Daughters Courageous* (Director: MICHAEL CURTIZ). This is a barefaced attempt to repeat the success of *Four Daughters* with very nearly all the same principal players, the same director, and no reference at all to the earlier story but a new one in the same manner. If I know anything it will go over just as big.

The four daughters are the same: the three real sisters, PRISCILLA, ROSEMARY and LOLA LANE, and GALE PAGE. The father is the same: CLAUDE RAINS. MAY ROBSON is there again—as a housekeeper this time. The four Boy Friends are the same: JOHN GARFIELD, DICK FORAN, FRANK McHUGH, JEFFREY LYNN. The chief differences are that this time FAY BAINTER is the mother, and CLAUDE RAINS is not a member of a united family but an interloper, the father who deserted them twenty years ago and now returns just at the time when he can do most harm; for the mother is about to marry again, a good steady man with money.

You might suppose that a picture made with such a careful eye on the blue-prints of an earlier success would prove to be unpleasantly obvious "hokum." I should have supposed this myself; but I must admit that, even while recognising at every turn the parallels, the deliberate parallels, with *Four Daughters*, I quite enjoyed it. Attractive people, good dialogue—some of this is melodramatic and stagey, but not much—good camera-

work and skilful direction can work wonders.

I was going to say that the story is shallower than that of *Four Daughters*; but now I think that, broadly speaking, the earlier plot was about equally superficial. That dealt with the simple obvious differences between the characters of the four girls; this concerns the no less simple and obvious difference between people with what the films call "wanderlust," and people without it. There's little effort to distinguish between the sisters—though GALE PAGE is again the one out

thing the average filmgoer will brave the winter dark to visit—for the performance of FLORA ROBSON, which is good.

Perhaps I'd better not reveal the key of the plot, though people who haven't gathered it from other notices (of either the play or the film) are unlikely to be in the dark for long. Anyway, it deals with the misery stirred up in a village by anonymous letters. You watch the poison working in nearly every household: it drives the sempstress (CATHERINE LACEY) to suicide when she is suspected of writing the letters; it drives a jealous husband (ROBERT NEWTON—he deserves a change, he had the same sort of part in *Farewell Again*) to murder. Police and a handwriting expert descend on the village, and finally one is left to suppose that the cloud has lifted with the suicide of the letter-writer.

There are some excellent portraits of certain characters in the village; but on the whole it's a lamentably artificial place. FLORA ROBSON, I repeat, is good; REGINALD TATE as the worried and conscientious Vicar is good; and many of the small-part people are good. But the picture left on me the impression of a great deal of wasted talent.

The short film *The First Days* in the same programme, though—the G.P.O. Film Unit's record of the first days of the war—is an excellent, stimulating and entertaining little work. Quite a straightforward account, simply recalling to Londoners the experiences they all passed

through; but how well done! Here in these brilliantly-composed pictures are the volunteer sandbag-filling, the balloons, the evacuation of the children, the first warnings—all things you have seen recorded in the news reels, but never so intelligently and wittily, never in a way to give such pleasure to the eye. (They may have formed part of your own experience, but it's unlikely that you realised what good pictures they would make.) Don't fear an over-dose of War-time Cockney Humour: the few examples of it are natural, unforced and genuinely amusing. This is worth making an effort to see; keep a look-out for it. R. M.



[Poison Pen]

PANGS UNPENNED

Mrs. Kemp MERLE TOTTENHAM
Mary Rider FLORA ROBSON

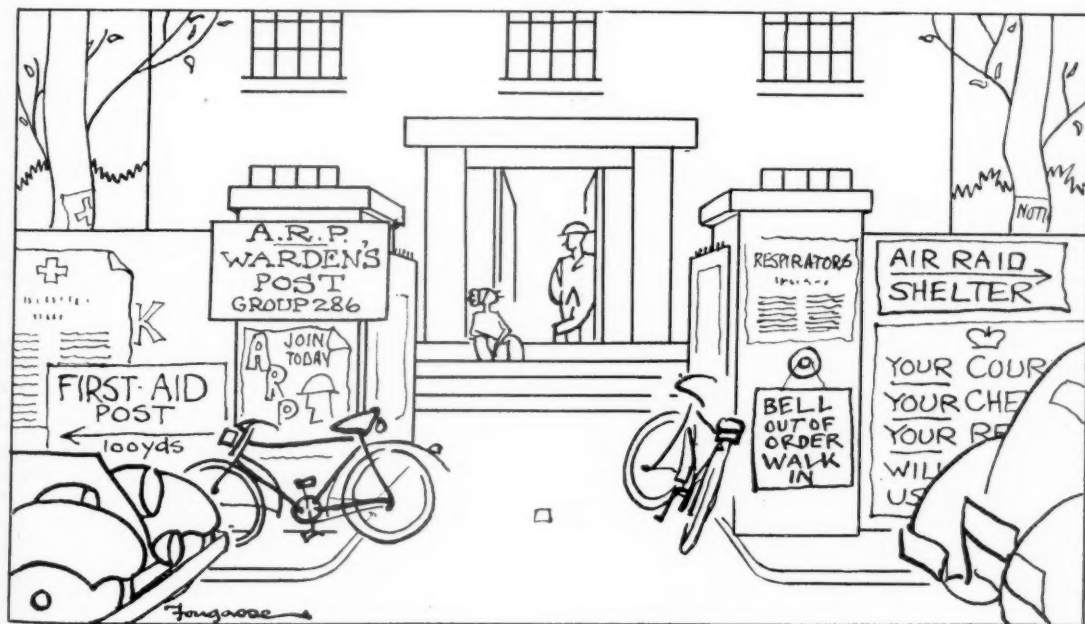
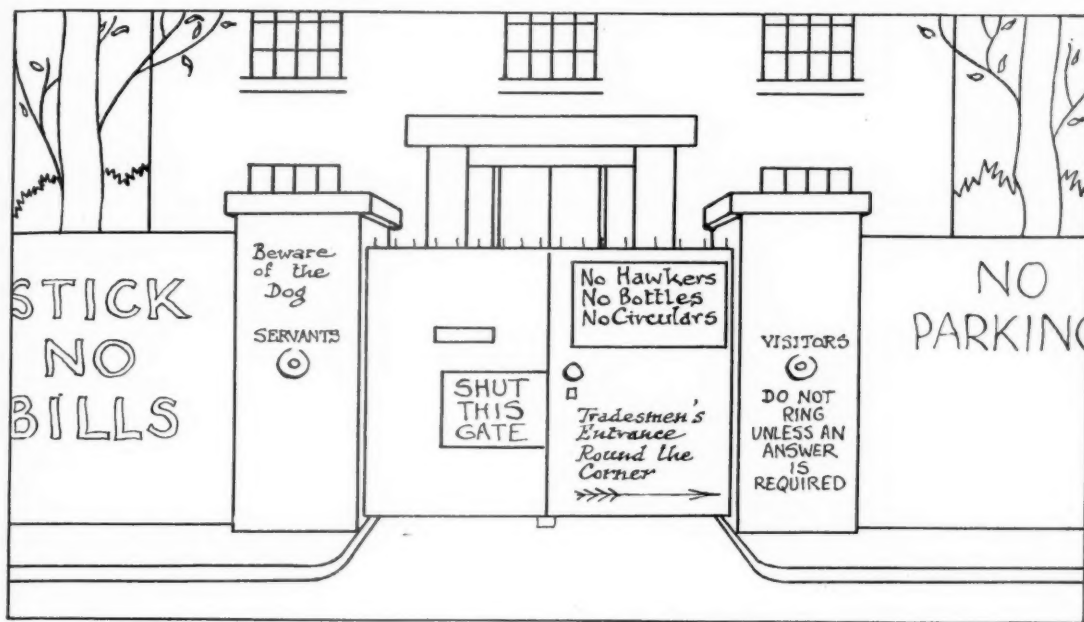
for a career (drama this time, not music; and JEFFREY LYNN is a dramatist this time, not a composer).

The title of course is bad; but it doesn't mean anything, so don't let it worry you.

Poison Pen (Director: PAUL L. STEIN) ought to be so much better than it is that it leaves, in me at any rate, a feeling of irritation. It suffers perhaps from having been a play to begin with: the producer's approach, I imagine, was to consider how the existing story could be expanded and broadened. You see it, if you do see it—and I'm bound to say that it isn't the sort of

THE CHANGING FACE OF BRITAIN

XIV.—ENGLISHMAN'S HOUSE



Behind the Lines

VIII.—The Sinking of the "Winston Churchill"

YOU want to see old Joe Goebbels, 'oo scuppered the British Fleet?
We'll find 'im down at the "Mermaid" at the bottom of William Street. . . .
'Ere, Joe, now tell us the story, the 'ow and the when and the where
You torpedoed the Winston Churchill with only a knot to spare.

We were lying just off the Banks, boys, with the flood-tide rising high,
And all of us there were devil-may-care and ready to do or die,
When sudden as death across the Bay an 18-pounder barks—
And I blew my tanks and sent to the Banks another five million marks.

Then we shortened sail and took the gale abaft of the main jib-boom,
And Karl went down to the fo'c'sle hatch and I went up to my room.
We'd plotted our course and planned our moves like an intricate game of chess,
Which left me time for a gin-and-lime before I was due to dress.

There was Fritz at the wheel, and Kurt from Kiel, and Karl at the periscope,
And I was having my evening bath and groping round for the soap;
The wind was all of it fifty knots and slapping across the tide—
And I took the spray in the usual way and then stepped out and dried.

We kept one eye on the darkening sky and one on the rolling wave;
It was sixteen bells by my old dog-watch, thus giving me time to shave.
We'd set our sights for 1,000 yards, and the shells began to scream
As I up and conned my favourite blonde, who was looking a perfect dream.

There was Fritz at the wheel and Kurt from Kiel and a nice little meal for two,
And we altered our course from time to time as a mariner's bound to do;
There was Fritz at the wheel, and Kurt from Kiel was manning the forward gun—
And we filled our tanks, and the blonde said "Thanks, if it's Bollinger '21."

Then I called for the car and a large cigar, and I called for my faithful man
To help me into my fur-lined coat with its collar of astrakhan;
And I said good-bye to my lady friend (the women come first with me)—
"God rest our souls" (I thought in the Rolls) "who earn our bread by the sea!"

The spume flies high in a lurid sky and the long grey waters moan
As I take my fur-lined overcoat off and step to the microphone.

I clear my throat and a bell-like note goes echoing down the air . . .
And that's when I sank the Churchill, boys, with only a knot to spare.
A. A. M.

War Aims and Kindred Nonsense

War Aims

THE death of Horace Mole, seventh assistant editor to *The Bilious Weekly*, was singularly sad. He was one of those who are still loudly insisting that no thinking Briton can be expected to enter the war with a whole heart and a good conscience until the Government have more clearly stated what he is fighting for. Poor Mole took this complaint so much to heart that it governed all his actions. Loyally, like the rest of us, he blacked his windows, but he could not force himself to do it thoroughly. At the edge of every window he left (deliberately) a little gleam to signify that he was far from satisfied about the Allies' ultimate intentions in Chittagong, Zanzibar and other places. All the neighbours sympathised; and all looked forward to the day when the Prime Minister would make a ringing and detailed pronouncement about the Allied intentions concerning Chittagong, and Horace with a new heart would be able to hide his lights completely.

Unhappily, poor Horace used the same technique when walking the streets at night. Pausing half-way across a main road, he remarked with anxious emphasis to his companion, "If only I could be sure that we shall do the right thing by Zanzibar and Chitta—" It was just then that the ambulance lady, driving without mental reservations, got him.

* * * * *

Most of us have quite enough *pukka* worries without inventing unnecessary ones. But Horace and his friends have been tormenting their minds with this question: What are we to *call* this war when it is over? How, for example distinguish it from the Great War (1914-1918)? This does not spoil our sleep, the simple answer being that this is the Same War—with The Same Enemy; and almost the only new feature is that to-day we have no quarrel with the enemy.

* * * * *

And that removes the "War Aims worry." Mr. Asquith, as we have already reminded the world, defined the Allied War Aims in the first months of the war. ("We shall never sheathe the sword, etc.") Those aims are still unsecured; and, with one verbal amendment, that declaration will do very well to-day, in the twenty-sixth year of the struggle. Indeed it might have been much better if that statement had been allowed to stand alone; and President Wilson had been forcibly prevented from clogging the world-mind with his mushy pronouncements. The said mush has been causing trouble ever since. *Herr Hitler* (it is rude, we hear, to leave out *Herr*) based the burglaries of September, 1938, on a single fragment of Wilson's War Aims—the word "self-determination"—and bamboozled half the world with it. And now *The Bilious Weekly* wants to put *more* mush in the carburettor.

* * * * *

Let us put it, crudely, in this way. If you detect a burglar in the house your War Aims are simple: To catch the burglar



"We're sitting here drinking tea, and there's a war on."

and recover the family jewels. It may well be that the poor fellow had a bad fall in his youth, or has "never had a fair chance." You may think (later) that if he was sent to Oxford and given a good education he would settle down and be a good citizen; and when he has been convicted (and come out), you may nobly resolve to help the poor chap. Those would be Peace Aims. But just now, if some neutral neighbour says, "I'm not going to help you catch the fellow unless you promise to give him a scholarship at Balliol," you will know how to reply. And very similar, my bilious brothers, is the motto for to-day.

* * * * *

"Tavern-talk"

Loose tavern-talk, we shall all agree, may be highly dangerous to-day, and some of the notices to that effect are good. But we were somewhat alarmed by this one:

"DO NOT DISCUSS ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT BE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE."

"*Might*." Not the birth-rate, for example, or vegetables; or even the weather? It would be simpler, surely, to say, "Do not talk at all."

No "Blockade"

Even in war-time we may as well use our words correctly, especially if they are war-words. Most people, and most papers (not *The Times*), are still describing the admirable operations of the British Contraband Control as "our blockade." But as the Minister for Economic Warfare has made quite clear, in answer to a question by my poor friend Pomeroy, there is no such thing (at present). He said:

"The essence of blockade is the prevention of *all* ingress to and egress from the blockaded coast or place, irrespective

of the nationality of the ship or of the origin, nature, ownership or destination of her cargo.

"His Majesty's Government have not declared any blockade of Germany. They have, however, instituted a system of control over imports of contraband into Germany directly or through neutral countries. This is considered effective to prevent the passage to Germany of articles useful for the prosecution of the war."

It is not, Bobby, a "mere" matter of words. The point is that we are (wisely, no doubt) not yet doing all that we have the right and power to do; but we cannot expect to have this acknowledged and understood if we use a technical term suggesting that we are. It is like saying "capital levy," when what we mean is "income tax." Blockade is an absolute affair; our contraband control is a selective system. Later, we may conceivably want to declare a full blockade; but then we shall have no word to describe it. Probably we want a new short word for our present operations. How about "half-Nelson"?

"Following"

Not content with corrupting the English, we are now teaching the foreigner this horrid trick. *The Daily Sketch* usefully gives half a page daily to "News in three languages," and on November 3 we found this:

Nach der schlimmsten Nachricht aus Moskau . . .

Following the bad news that he can expect no military aid from Moscow . . .

Après avoir appris qu'il ne pouvait s'attendre . . .

The earnest foreign student in London is thus informed that the English for *après* and *nach* is "following." But this, we still timidly submit, is not so. A. P. H.

o o

Thin End of the Wedge

"Food rationing in England is now becoming intense. The Englishman can no longer have his bacon with his ham and eggs for breakfast."—*English broadcast from Hamburg.*

o o

"The *Queen Mary* has been painted battleship-grey since the war started, while the *Normandie* has been literally packed in mothballs in expectation of a long period of inactivity."

Daily Paper.

That'll fool 'em.



"Gosh! Aren't you sick and tired of all these silly jokes about the black-out?"



POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS—LIFE AT SEA WHEN UNCLE WILL WAS A LAD

I've Got It

I HAVE the influenza.

I know it, because of the buzzing at the back of my knees and because I am sad. "Tackle it early," they say, "and you can stop it."

So I gargle with the stuff that tastes like ink and red pepper to kill the germs in my throat, and swallow a few drops to kill the germs in my inside. There is nothing I hate so much as the stuff that tastes like ink and red pepper. I never see it except when I have the influenza.

Anne says I ought to go to bed.

She has found some little tablets the doctor gave me three years ago when I was run down, and I have found two wrinkled and deflated capsules in a box marked "Quinine and Cinnamon."

I take the tablets because Anne

thinks they will strengthen me, and I take the capsules because of their lovely sounding names.

"Quinine," I murmur, and "Cinnamon," and think exotic Eastern thoughts while I look for some more hankies.

After the sore throat, which has been aggravated by the stuff that tastes like ink and red pepper, comes the gulping stage.

It is a tennis-ball in my gullet—or is it a football?—and everything I swallow passes laboriously round its circumference. Uncanny but not painful.

I take three drops of liniment marked "Poison" on a lump of sugar, but it is not fatal.

The germs pass on, a happy indus-

trious band, to my nose and chest. I cough pathetically and wheeze.

"Go to bed," says Anne. "Get the doctor," says Anne. But I am too brave. I say it is nothing, and drag my aching limbs about the house looking for the embrocation to rub on my chest and the camphor to hold to my nose.

I cannot find the embrocation and I cannot smell the camphor. It is synthetic, I fear. Ah, yes, it is. It won't push the little celluloid duck round the bath (A Scientific Wonder! Perpetual Motion at Last? Only tuppence!); and Anne says I ought to know better than be playing with water at my age and when I've got a cold.

The lady next door sends in two

brown tablets that did her husband good once, and the newspaper-man talks earnestly about the tobacco pills he makes for his dogs. This, I think, is going rather far, but I swallow the two brown tablets because she is rather pretty and we smile at each other over the fence when I haven't got the influenza.

I send out for two ounces of eucalyptus gums. I hate eucalyptus gums.

The tennis-ball goes away from my throat and my head increases by about 23. This is to accommodate the germs who have arranged a party rally up there and come trooping along in companies, singing the "Horst Wessel" song, from various parts of my anatomy.

When they have finished the "Horst Wessel" song they sing "The Internationale," and then "Say to yourself I will be happy, I will be . . ."

I send out for two ounces of extra strong peppermints. I loathe peppermints.

Anne says Go to bed, and she will bring me a hot-water bottle, some boiled onions, bread-and-milk, a lemon drink and a game of the little boy next door's called "Stick-a-build."

I say No, and take my temperature. It is two degrees below normal, and I take a large dose of "Energio."

Anne says, "What's Canada Balsam, because here's a bottle?" I can't quite remember but I make believe I do and rub a little on my chest. "Balsam" is a sweet comforting word. Anything called "Balsam" must have gentle healing properties.

After it has set I remember I bought it for sticking down microscope slide-covers once when I had a microscope a long time ago to look at all the marvels of nature—mites in cheese, animalculæ in water, etc., etc., etc. Ah me! A long, long time ago.

I take my temperature. It is two degrees above normal and I take four aspirin.

The germs are now singing madly: "Say to yourself I will be happy, I will be happy, I will be . . ." They don't know any more, so they keep on singing that, especially the "will be happy," and my head is now 24.

"A couple of days in bed and you'd be all right," says Anne.

"No," I say, and pounce with aching avidity upon a long-forgotten bottle of "S.O.X. Kills Cold Germs Dead." It has lost its label, but I

know it by the colour. I forget whether I drink it or rub it on. Anne says crossly, Do both, it might fetch the Canada Balsam off.

It is unkind, and I want to cry at her heartlessness, but my eyes are now such a tight fit I cannot get any tears past them.

I send out for a tin of cough-drops, some tetrachlorophylamininbenzoethyl and a pot of chilli paste. I try to remember what goose-grease does. "I think I'll go to bed," I say.

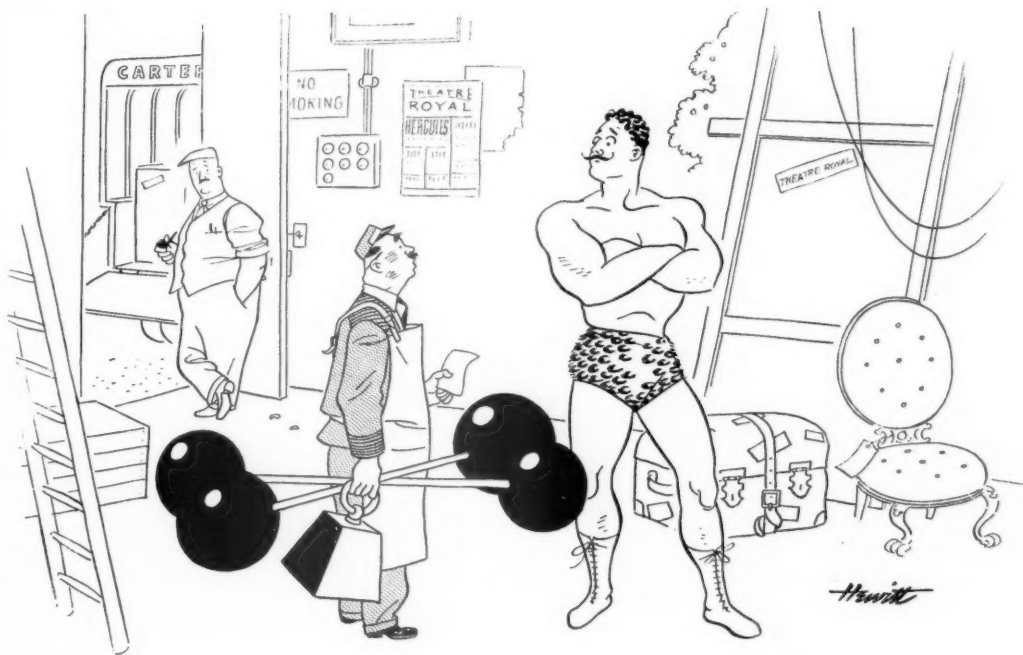
"Do," she says kindly, and kisses me behind the ear, where there are probably no loose germs.

She lights me a fire. She brings me hot broth and calls the doctor. She is a darling, and I feel the pathetic clinging love of a little child for her.

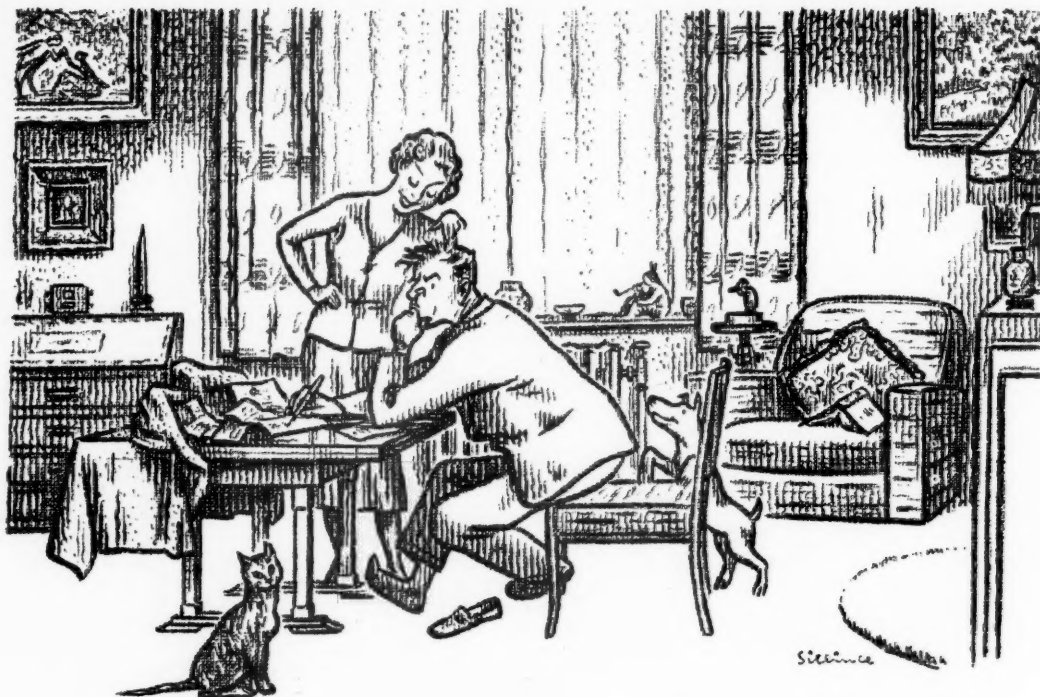
It is very comfortable in bed, warm and quiet and peaceful. I think I will stay here a fortnight.

"Tcha!" says the doctor, taking my temperature (it is normal). "You're all right. You've got over the worst of it. You'd better get up and look after your wife."

I see her in the bathroom out of the corner of my eye. She is getting down the bottle of stuff that tastes like ink and red pepper.



"Are you Mr. Hercules?"



"How much worth of income-tax has my clever Bobsy-Wobsy earned this time?"

Elegy in a Country Churchyard

(On hearing of the appointment of a Controller of Bird-Seed)

WELL, never mind what's past
and gone,
The war at length is really
getting on;
And news of this sound job
Sets all my martial veins athrob.
Time after time I've thundered
About this appalling oversight
And wondered
If they would ever brace themselves
And do
What seemed so obvious; now
My dream's come true.
My dream's come true;
Ah, yea, in very deed
We have at last a
Controller of Bird-Seed.

But what's his name?
The public is aflame
To know that same . . .
Is he an ornithologist of fame,
Some man who's scaled the mountains
of Tibet
Looking for all the rarest he could get,
Some bold pursuer of ostriches
And emus?
Or, on a humbler plane, a

Mere photographer of the
Nests of gannets, terns and sea-mews,
Or someone, at least, who in
Books for bairns describes
The more mentionable habits
Of the feathered tribes?
Is he some well-known animal fancier
Like the late Sir Edwin Landseer,
Or has it occurred
To those who arrange these
Things to appoint Sir Richard Bird?

I doubt it; these things aren't done;
That's not the way the Greater
European War was won.
Judging by the precedent of the
Ministry of Information,
He will be some shipowner of
Exalted station;
Or some architect in need
Will be rationing the seed;
Or some eminent counsel
Will be doling out the groundsel;
With a General, ablaze with stars
As Sub-Controller for Budgerigars,
And a Colonel of the Blues
As Deputy-Director of Cockatoos,
And a traveller from the

Conjoint Dairies
As Assistant-Controller of
Canaries,
And a Don straight from
The Schools
As Deputy-Assistant-
Supervisor of Mules,
And an agent of concert and theatre
seats
As Deputy-Deputy for
Parrots and Parakeets,
Let alone the Sub-Assistant-
Deputy-Supervisor-Controllers
Of Rollers.

Somewhere, as on a peak in
Darien,
Is there some Lord of Men,
On a lonely crest far off,
Far off,
Some fearful Toff
Who controls
The Putting of Square Pegs
Into Round Holes?

I cannot tell—can you?
Jug-jug, too-whatta-whoo!

J. C. S.



WINGS FROM THE WEST

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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Tuesday, November 7th.—Lords: Statements on India and Polish Refugees.

Commons: Debates on War Finance and Transport.



ON THE HOME FRONT

THE END OF A CANARD

"I have reason to believe that this is one of the rumours deliberately circulated in the vain endeavour to shake public confidence."

Mr. Hore-Belisha.

Wednesday, November 8th.—Lords: Statement on War at Sea. Debates on Export Trade, Oil from Coal, and Horses.

Commons: Statement on War at Sea. Debate on Food Rationing.

Thursday, November 9th.—Lords: Sitting of seven minutes.

Commons: National Loans Bill and Restriction of Advertisement (War Risks Insurance) Bill given Second Reading.

Tuesday, November 7th.—There is not much to be said about the Indian deadlock, as the Lords gathered from Lord ZETLAND. Congress has dug its toes in firmly on the question of India's independence, and as a result the Governors have had to take over provincial control except in a few cases. As soon as Congress is prepared to show a more reasonable attitude, they will gladly relinquish it. Lord ZETLAND told the House that in the meantime the VICEROY was patiently doing all he could. Lord SNELL asked the Government for a bolder lead, and Lord SAMUEL blamed them for delay in carrying out their promises.

After Lord PORTSEA had complained

of difficulties in the shipment of peers from the Norman Archipelago, a romantic spot which sounded less so when referred to coldly by Lord DUFFERIN as the Channel Islands, Lord HALIFAX announced a gift by the Government of £100,000 to help Polish refugees.

Mr. HORE-BELISHA is always convincing as the Little Father of his troops. He is a stirring sight when some back-bencher rasher than his fellows dares suggest that one day last week a private failed to get a lump of sugar in his tea. This afternoon he assured the House that the British Army was treated better than any other in the world, and that he knew of no single case where ill-treatment of a British soldier had been proved. Mr. WOODBURN raising the question of recruits in Scotland who were alleged to have been obliged to send home for food and overcoats, Mr. HORE-BELISHA declared his belief that this was another malicious rumour deliberately circulated, and read a letter from a Member who had investigated a similar rumour and found it absolutely unfounded. When Mr. ATTLEE pressed that many Members were receiving complaints of lack of blankets, he begged him to be more judicious, seeing that such statements were all broadcast to Germany; but he offered to send down an inspector immediately to look into the Scottish case.

The allegation of a daily paper that there is now an inner Cabinet from which the Defence Ministers are excluded was described by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN as a malicious invention.

The CHANCELLOR announced that the Government would soon set up a Select Committee on expenditure. A similar parliamentary watch-dog did

good work in checking waste in the last war.

The main business of the evening was finance, the CHANCELLOR moving the resolution on which the National Loans Bill will be based. He told the House that the actual terms of a loan could not safely be discussed before the



ON THE HOME FRONT

"We are starting the major operation of the war."

Mr. Pethick-Lawrence on National Loans.

issue was made, as the information might be misused in the interval, and it was therefore necessary for the Government to take wide powers.

Those who feel that the dreariness of the financial outlook calls for some light relief will welcome Mr. OSWALD LEWIS's idea that there should be an issue of bonds bearing no interest, but one per cent. of which should be redeemed each year at twice their par value. It would be a mild enough gamble, in all conscience.

Wednesday, November 8th.—Their Lordships closed the evening on a tetchy note. After they had listened to Lord CHATFIELD's statement, on the lines of Mr. CHURCHILL's, and discussed trade and oil from coal, Lord FARINGDON severely criticised the manner in which horses had been commandeered. Lord COBBAM denied that the Government had been inconsiderate, and Lord CRAWFORD having somewhat heavily reproved Lord FARINGDON, Lord SNELL in turn reproved Lord CRAWFORD. But it was all good clean fun, really.

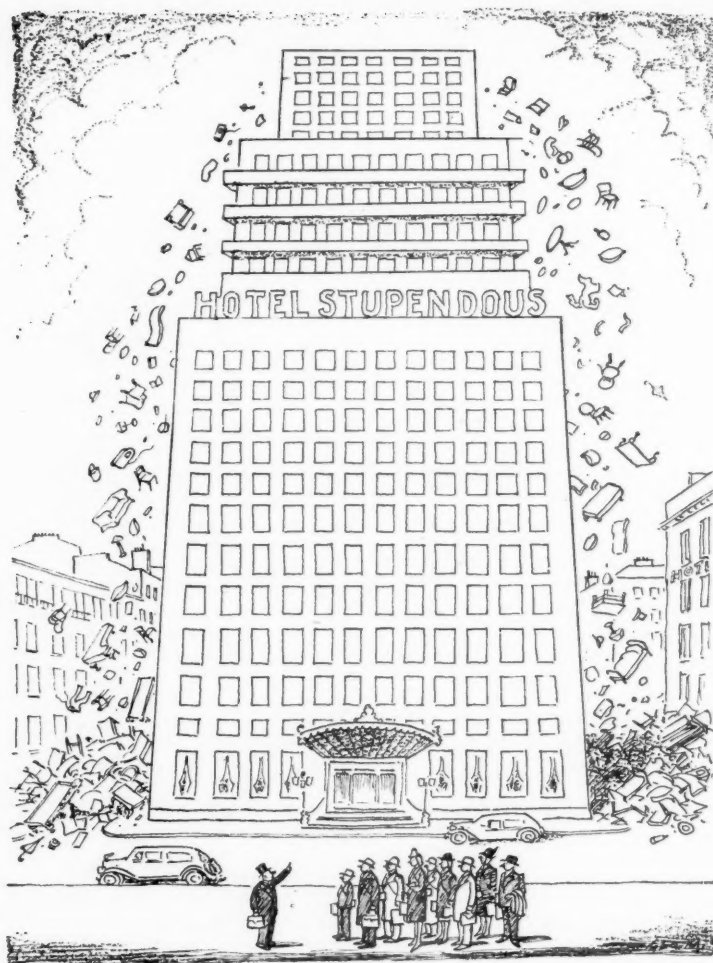
Towing a coal-fire about behind one's car savours a little of the hot-chestnut trade, but Mr. GEOFFREY LLOYD announced in the Commons that a suitable producer having now been designed, the Government were prepared



ALEXANDER THE GREAT CO-OPERATOR

"We do not beg it, we demand it."

Mr. Alexander on Food Rationing.



"And if there's not enough room we will take the hotel over the way."

to give immunity from taxation for five years to coal, coke or gas used as a fuel for transport, and to guarantee that for this purpose they would not be rationed and that the additional weight involved would be ignored in licensing.

The feature of the day was of course Mr. CHURCHILL's statement on the war at sea. It was more subdued than the last, though he delighted everyone by declaring that we should be happy to engage the entire German Navy with only those vessels claimed as victims by enemy propagandists. He began by admitting that the sinking of the *Royal Oak* had been made possible because Scapa Flow was not as efficiently guarded as it should have been. Both the Admiralty and the Fleet had

accepted an undue degree of risk; without giving away secret information he was unable to tell the House in what respect. Steps would be taken within the Service, but he had decided against a judicial inquiry. He announced the loss through an accident of H.M.S. *Oxley*, a submarine; and, turning to the U-boat campaign, gave the House the rather sombre warning that, though we were sinking enemy submarines at the rate of from two to four a week, it must not be forgotten that as many as two a week were being launched from German yards. The balance of tonnage and cargo remained favourable. Continual losses to our shipping, he said, had to be expected, but already we had three times as

many hunting craft as we had in September, and "I feel no doubt that in the end we shall break their hearts." He wound up with warm tributes to the French as well as to our own Navy.

The debate on food rationing ranged between the view of Mr. ALEXANDER that it should begin next week, and that of the Minister, Mr. MORRISON, who was against the rationing of any commodity while reasonable supplies of it could be obtained. Buns and butter, while we may.

Thursday, November 9th.—The war has been particularly unkind to Sir SAMUEL HOARE in making necessary the shelving of the Criminal Justice Bill, which embodied so many reforms for which he had personally worked. The Opposition Members begged him this afternoon to see if he could not somehow contrive to find space for it. Mr. GRAHAM WHITE urging that to pass such a humane measure when the world was dominated by violence would be an excellent piece of propaganda; by this point the Lord Privy Seal was clearly impressed, but he explained that the obstacle was not shortage of Parliamentary time but the existing pressure on Government draftsmen and officials. Mr. ATTLEE's suggestion that some of the eminent counsel now partially unemployed could help seemed to offer a way out. To have to waste so progressive a Bill would be too much of a compliment to an enemy who would find most of its provisions incomprehensible.

The Government's change of mind in regard to Coal will be extremely popular, not only among consumers but among those who find it difficult to reconcile restrictive rationing with mining unemployment. In announcing that the rationing was to be increased to one hundred per cent. of last year's consumption, Mr. LLOYD said that present stocks were satisfactory but that enemy action might always enforce strict economy at short notice.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN being unfortunately ill, Sir SAMUEL HOARE answered Mr. ATTLEE's question about the peace appeal from the Low Countries. The Government were consulting with the Dominions and with our Allies before advising the KING on his reply; though they were not very hopeful of a constructive response from Germany, they had no wish to carry on the war for a day longer than was necessary if a satisfactory settlement could be arranged by other methods.

The main debate was on the Bill to restrict the activities of companies offering over-optimistic war insurances. It will do this.

Naval Intelligence, etc.

THOSE of us who've always had a craving to make up crossword puzzles if only we were clever enough are now in full swing inventing clues without any of the tricky business of fitting them into a pattern with little black squares.

In our eager attempts to conceal information from the enemy while revealing it to our relations our letters have become unintelligible to one and all.

No, we write excitedly, John has not gone out by where Isobel had typhoid so badly, she has gone by the place where Joan had her second baby.

Peter has seen Bunny, not the one I was at school with, the other one, with red hair. Of course I can say *nothing*, specially on the telephone, but the other day the ship passed quite close to Michael's godfather . . . No, not him, he lives near Newmarket . . . Darling Mummy, I've told you millions of times who his godfathers are, you must remember him at the wedding; he's got the most extraordinary red eyes.

Tom's at a place he used to be sent to when he was little to avoid hay fever, where could that be? Somewhere with short grass, I suppose, but everywhere in England I can think of is simply teeming with hay. I am serving under the chap who made a pass at Diana that spring in Bermuda. If you can stay with Barbara's parents-in-law next week there's a chance I might get ashore and see you. Guy says they oiled near where we stayed with Sylvia last summer. The other day at sea we passed the chap we dined with in June who used to be Sandy's captain.

Sometimes our clues carelessly get less personal: "We went in yesterday to the name-place of the nephew of the owner of the *Lizard*." Anyone who has been to Malta, unless it were for five hours on a pleasure cruise, can answer that one, but will it also be clear as the day to the Gestapo? There are those of us, I fear, who incline to underestimate the intelligence of our opponents, but I expect we shall be properly browned off by the censor before we do irreparable damage.

"It is rather grim here," we announce shamelessly, "but I hope to be a great deal nearer to you next week." But I notice that people with husbands in the B.E.F. have codes of even more startling ingenuousness. Anyway, references to Aunt Lily and Cousin Amy are so transparent that the chances are



"Is 'e French or German, Bert?"

Himmler'll think he's being double-crossed. Aunt Queenie is nice and clear, and Mademoiselle's Home shouldn't present insuperable difficulties, and as for Bev— But no, this is a war and we must close our ranks like mad and I'm not going to tell you who's the code word for whatever that place may be.

Commercial Accuracy

"In a black-out lighting offence case at South Shields on Saturday the name of a shop managed by defendant was referred to as the Thirty Shilling Tailors, 89, King Street, South Shields. This should have been the Thirty Five Shilling Tailors, 89, King Street, South Shields."

Newcastle Paper.

At the Play

"RUNAWAY LOVE" (SAVILLE)

I'M afraid we have got to brace ourselves against a flood of artless humour designed to stay the rigours and, still more, the boredom of war. Criticising it at all realistically lays the critic open to the charge of being high-hat and a snob, and while he is thinking out a suitable retort to that he is reminded, unanswerably, that broad and silly jokes along the tram-lines of convention have been the main pleasure of the troops since the clash of flint battle-axes first resounded.

This musical account of the misadventures of a double honeymoon sadly lacks wit, but an audience largely in khaki found it much to its taste, and Mr. GEORGE GEE's untiring ingenuity brought round upon round of applause. Ably assisted by Mr. ERIC FAWCETT and by the part-author, Mr. BARRY LUPINO, he made the most of his material. His chief effect being to suffuse his particularly male face with overwhelming coyness, the subject suited him well.

In this case the course of true love ran very crooked. A certain retired major somewhere in the British countryside had a daughter whom he had shamelessly offered to the local air-raid warden as compensation for the worthlessness of a number of I.O.U.s. The warden himself had a daughter, and soon after the play began the two girls were swept off their feet by a couple of R.A.F. officers who first dropped pamphlets over the major's garden out of sheer habit and then came down with special licences sticking out of their pockets. The housemaid having similarly bullied the drunken gardener, all three couples went off privily to church and imagined themselves decently united. Aha! But wait! A circular collar is easily bought and country rectors do not always check up closely on the identity of locums!

Borrowing the warden's

car and miraculously overcoming the petrol difficulty, the R.A.F. party reached Scotland in a day and then got lost in a mist. Fortunately there was a cottage near at hand belonging to a minister and his wife, and here,

after a great many pound notes had changed hands, it was agreed that they would stay the night. The scene which followed was the usual popular libel on the hospitality and good sense of the Scots. Quotations from the rude forefathers of economics, such as "Many a Mickle makes a Muckle," lined the walls, not even a cup of tea was to be had, and a bottle of champagne discovered in a suitcase was promptly flung out of the window by an outraged Mrs. *McTavish*. That was perhaps not so libellous, for I cannot forget a bottle of criminally light beer I once rashly introduced into a citadel of Welsh probity, which only escaped the same indignity because the window jammed.

One of the couples was supposed to spend the night in an open bed-cupboard off the sitting-room, and in preparation Mr. GEE and Miss MARJORIE SANDFORD spent nearly half an hour on the ancient comedy of timorous undressing. Their manœuvres were cut short by the arrival—it said much at that hour for the efficiency of the village post office—of a telegram breaking the news that the morning's service had been conducted by a masquerading layman. At that Mrs. *McTavish* very properly segregated the sexes, and after the men had unsuccessfully attempted to share the cupboard-bed the party crept away into the night. Next morning a remarkable reunion took place in a highland barn, at which they were joined by all the characters from the first scene, and everything was fixed up with a minimum of bother.

Miss SANDFORD and Miss TONIE LUPINO played the brides with spirit. Miss ESMA CANNON as the adenoidal housemaid scored heavily. Mr. BILLY MAYERL's tunes were catchy, and he played them himself very skilfully on an electrical one-man band controlled by a fat piano whose face had come out in a rash of knobs and switches. Most of the known noises seemed within the thing's compass.

ERIC.



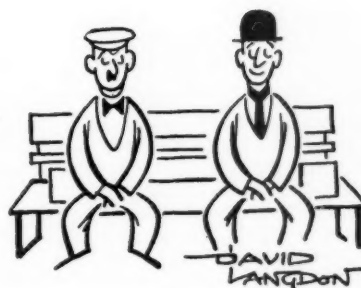
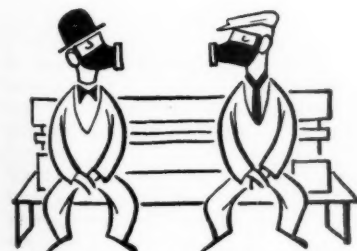
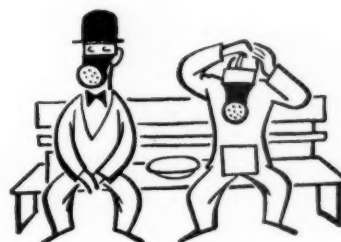
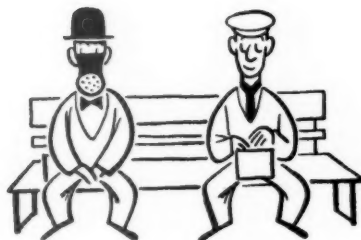
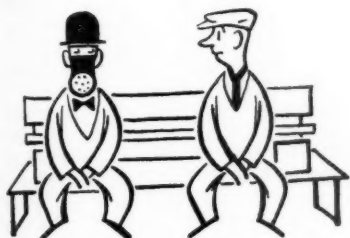
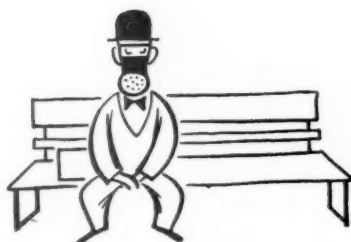
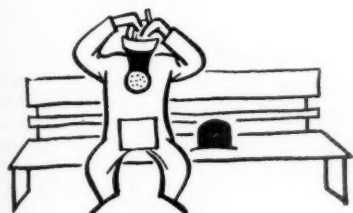
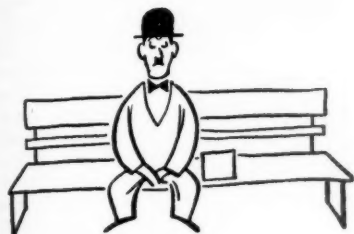
ELDERLY FLING IN THE HIGHLANDS

Trott Mr. BARRY LUPINO
Elizabeth Miss ESMA CANNON



THE AWAKENING OF GEORGE GEE DIOGENES

Peter Fenton Mr. GEORGE GEE
Betty Plunkett Miss MARJORIE SANDFORD



DAVID
LANGDON



"We did oor best tae convairsse wi' the German pilot, but he didnae onnerstand ae worrrrd!"

American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers

ALTHOUGH in my most recent appearance on the rostrum I dwelt for some time on the subject of underworld slang (dwelt for some time? All but took up permanent residence!), you will recall that I concluded with a rather dramatic announcement that there would be more to come. For one thing, I had not yet

had the opportunity to point out that a really good set of dining-room furniture, by which I mean a crowded train, does not make good business for fang fakers. Nor had I cautioned you against being taken in by some door-matty rubber nose with apple knees wearing a seedy

Dicer. Derby. In case you didn't

quite follow, let me go back and define my terms, such as

Rubber nose. A welsher; one who fails to cough up on a bet he has lost. Many rubber noses are flashily attired (Confucius says: Velly often snake-in-glass have well-tailored skin), but others are like the one mentioned above, with apple knees (unpressed trousers) and a face which is unattractively

Door-matty. Unshaven. Often in the midst of a veritable door-matty jungle you may come upon a good set of

Dining-room furniture. Teeth. If any of the persons with whom the rubber nose has failed to keep faith have caught up with him and hung one on his latchpan (smacked him in the kisser), he may not be the possessor of a

Crowded train. Full set of teeth. Perhaps one or two may even have been toyed with by some

Fang faker. Dentist. Even among criminals themselves a rubber nose is placed in the same low class as the

Roller coaster. A crook among crooks; a cheat who even cheats his fellow cheats. One of whom it is said that "he holds a gun on himself when he plays solitaire." When the news is bruited about the underworld that a certain crook is a roller coaster, the wise thing for that certain crook to do is to

Take a mope. Depart with all possible haste. Otherwise he may become a

Clay pigeon. One upon whom the underworld has declared open season (and they don't hesitate to shoot a sitting clay pigeon either). When a roller coaster becomes a clay pigeon his wife is likely to become an

Ace of spades. A widow. If he is a gambler, a roller coaster may be the sort who reflects on his chances of winning at cards by employing a

Gaper. A small mirror concealed in the hand of a card cheat when dealing, which enables him to see how his opponents' hands are coming along as he deals them out. If he presently loses his nerve, his opponents in the game will later (or perhaps right then and there and in loud harsh tones) remark to one another that

"The rabbit showed up." One way of phrasing the news that a gambler's yellow streak put in an appearance in all its saffron glory. A gaper, by the way, should never be confused with a

Gazer. A person who stays all evening at a night-club but who doesn't spend much money. Gazers occur among all classes of night-club patrons, from grass-combers (country bumpkins) to

Big stingers. Bank presidents. Here the thought naturally occurs to us that

if bank presidents are called big stingers, then all those pompous gentlemen who sit around at their desks in the bank all day looking financially sound might be called vice-big stingers; but on sober second thought it seems doubtful that such an expression would be employed even by a

Whang. An ignorant loudmouth (*syn.*: cull). Unless he had spent some time in the Orient himself, a whang would probably not even know the difference between a tooler and a tool—though he would probably know what is meant by a

Tooler. Burglar. However, it is likely that his lantern jaw would be hanging at half-mast while he queried, "Huh?" if a comrade were to mention an almond-eyed

Tool. Coolie. Unless you are a whang, you should now be able to hazard a pretty shrewd guess at the meaning of the phrase,

Tooling a drag. Riding in a rickshaw. Whangs being the ignorant, loudmouthed, ignorant loudmouths they are, it is not unusual for them to get themselves into such great difficulties that they end up with

Throat trouble. The phrase which, it amuses convicts to believe, the prison hospital uses in its records to indicate a hanging. Throat trouble in its most serious phase is of course brought on by exposure to an

Up-tucker. Noose. When a whang has been forced to take a mope from the city because of having stuck up a big stinger as he strolled out to get into his telescope (limousine with a chauffeur), the whang may even be dull-witted enough to allow himself to suffer the supreme indignity; he may allow himself to be captured and brought to justice by a

Town clown. A village constable. Of course instead of sticking up the big stinger and robbing him of his interest in life, the whang and a couple of friends may decide to enter the bank and try to get at his principal. If they are successful and make off with some of the bank's choicest assets, then the thing which takes place at the earliest possible opportunity is

The great divide. The division of the spoils. If the loot is in cash, then each brigand receives a certain number of

Yards. Hundreds of dollars. We once noted that the term "feet" means dollars but, as we now see, there would be trouble in the underworld were the whang to tell a comrade, "Here's a yard for you," and throw him three dollars. Sometimes, just to create an impression, whangs lay a yard on the bar in a night-club when ordered by the bartender to

Decorate the mahogany. Put some cash on display upon receiving service. One reason the law often catches up with a whang after he has committed a crime is that he can't resist telling underworld acquaintances all about his exploit—always prefacing his remarks with the futile stipulation, "Remember, now, I'm tellin' youse dis strictly ;

Under the bed. In confidence and with the request that it be not repeated (*syn.*: under the wing). So much for the underworld then. Let's take a mope, shall we, because—this is strictly under the bed, y'understand—I think I've been in the underworld long enough. I find myself wondering if a bandit's

flight after robbing a bank of ten thousand dollars could be called a hundred-yard dash, and you know no good can possibly come of that sort of thing.

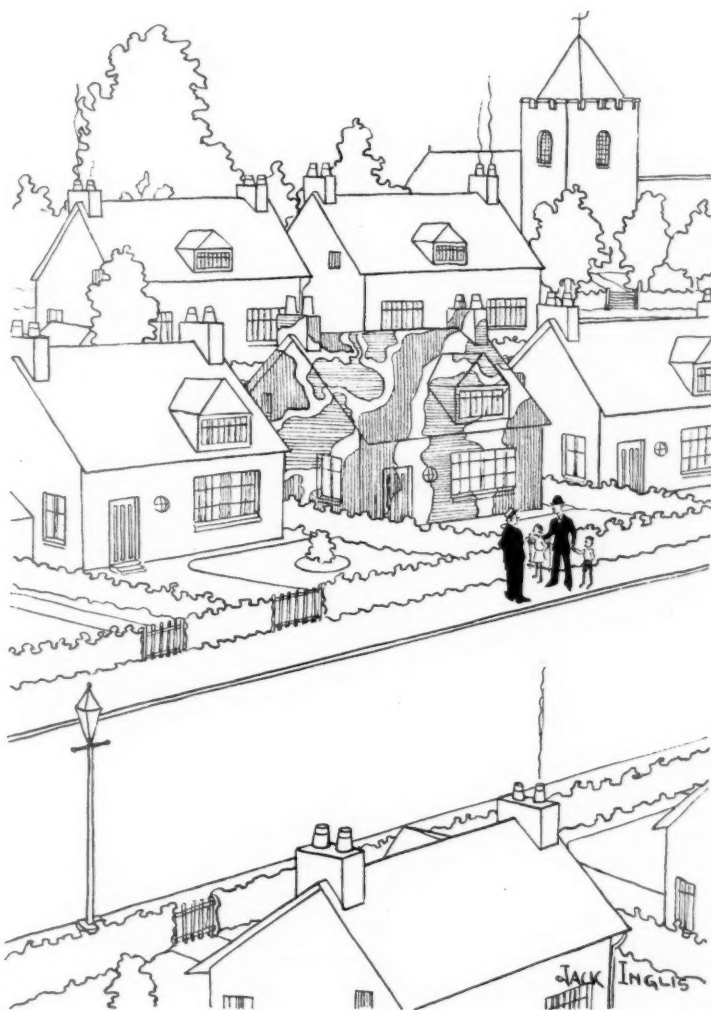
No Hare-Splitting

"In the event of a tie or ties, the prize will be divided, but a winner may receive only one hare."—*Sunday Paper.*

"AUSTRALIA'S 59 MILLION PLANS FOR DEFENCE"

Northern Paper.

"One sure if another fails . . ."



"I can't imagine how I found it so easily."

Effect of Reading the Papers

WE must all remember that this war has not yet begun.

The black-out, the uniforms, the balloons, the National Registration cards, the posters, the gas-masks and the sandbags have misled us into thinking that it had. The air-raid warnings also have played their part in the propagating of this error.

The country needs YOU—TO-DAY.

The fact that your services have been refused by practically every organisation in the country means nothing at all. So have those of thousands and thousands of others.

Stand by.

Go to.

Stay where you are.

Make jam.

But do not use sugar.

There is no sugar shortage and it will not be rationed. There will just be a sugar coupon in the ration books.

This means nothing—except that there is no sugar shortage and you are on your honour as a gentleman not to use it for any purpose whatsoever.

The Russians are Communists and the Nazis are Nazis and never the twain shall meet, and their pact of mutual friendship, agreement, assistance, aggression, attrition—(war of)—and aversion means, if anything, that Stalin wants peace.

Stalin is aiming at nothing less than the wholesale destruction of the Finnish frontier and will invade Finland if his demands are not acceded to, and Finland is preparing to defend herself.

Meantime, the Finnish-Soviet talks

in Moscow are proceeding in an amicable atmosphere. You see that, of course.

America will maintain strict neutrality.

This means that a tremendous flow of armaments starts almost immediately.

Good!

Or rather, good, if the war had really begun.

The burden of taxation is crushing.

The people in this country are not crushed a bit.

Morale has never been better.

The housewife in this country is turning the parlour into a dormitory and the flower-garden into a bearing garden and sharing her kitchen with the mothers of several evacuated London children. (Now read the statement about morale again. Rule Britannia!)

The black-out regulations are to be relaxed.

This should make a tremendous difference, because it means that the black-out regulations *will not be in force* at those early-morning and late-afternoon times in the winter months when it's pitch-dark out-of-doors anyway.

We are not at war with Germany.

The Germans not only do not know that we are *not* at war with them, they do not even know that they are at war with us. If this is an involved sentence, remind yourself that in all probability *it means nothing*, and anyway there is a Citizens' Advice Bureau which can explain it to you together with Fuel Regulations, National Registration, Food Coupons, Petrol Rationing, and how to tell a W.A.A.F. from a W.A.T.S.

Trade must at all costs—note the word *costs*—go on.

There must be normal expenditure and careful economy, both at the same time.

This country has speeded up, is speeding up, will speed up—(see "Amas, amat") the manufacture of ammunition so that leaflets may be dropped all over Germany.

Many lesser countries in Europe are now armed to the teeth. These are the neutral countries.

If anything about this war—which, after all, has not yet begun—seems in any way difficult to follow, ask yourself for what reason we have been given a Ministry of Information.

Then read the newspapers all over again and you will find the answer.

Then give up reading the newspapers altogether and relax, with a copy of Darwin's *Origin of Species* or Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. E. M. D.



"There doesn't seem to be a phrase for 'Your Tank is resting on my foot.'"

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M. D.



"It's a false rumour and you're a fool to repeat it—and, furthermore, everybody here heard it from me long before you ever got hold of it!"

To Working Parties

CAN YOU get all the materials you require for making up those much-appreciated comforts for our Hospitals?

Mr. Punch can help you, and with his Hospital Comforts Fund has been supplying large quantities of these materials to recognised organisations:

Chintz	350 yards.
Bleached Calico	640 "
Unbleached Calico	300 "
Turkey Twill	50 "
Flannelette	2,504 "
Winceyette	3,875 "

Knitting Wool :

Khaki/grey	2,432 lb.
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White	1,604 lb.
Navy Blue	817 "

BUT he needs co-operation if he is to carry on this work. If you have not already done so, ask your friends to send him all the money they can spare; then tell him of your needs and he will help you to send Comforts to the Hospitals.

Every penny sent him is spent on buying materials, and thanks to the generous co-operation of the Trades concerned, Mr. Punch is buying cheaply and well.

He takes no money for running expenses.

Please help and help NOW.

THE NEED IS URGENT



"None of your gas-masks for me. If I'm gassed, I'm gassed. D'you get me argument?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Rescue of Mozart

IN the 'eighties or even earlier in the last century it was the fashion in "precious" coteries to belittle MOZART as "tuny." Of late we have suffered from a passion for research which sees a virtue in reprinting with scrupulous accuracy every letter he wrote. As a corrective to this over-conscientious exploration of the drains and dust-bins of genius one can wish for nothing better than ANNETTE KOLB's *Mozart* (GOLLANCZ, 16/-). Here one finds a twofold tragedy implicit in the subject and the circumstances of the publication of the book. On the one hand there is the story of the perfect musician who never wrote anything second-rate, yet went to a pauper's grave in Vienna, the Mecca of his art. On the other we are confronted by the spectacle of the latest and most sensitive biographer of one who was, as he himself said, "German through and through," unable to gain a hearing in her own country, "where all that is Mozart—liberty, candour and joy—is lost." Mlle. KOLB's attitude cannot be called entirely judicial, but many interesting points emerge in her illuminating survey—none more than the duality of a personality, which loved the world, gaiety and nonsense, yet never escaped the "immanence of mortality," and spoke of death as his truest and best friend. His judgment of character was not first-rate; in music it was infallible. He had some splendid friends, but they either predeceased him or were absent—like HAYDN, the best of all—when most needed. Of CONSTANZE, his wife, and the WEBER family Mlle. KOLB has little good to say. Yet with all deductions this is an enthralling book, admirably translated by PHYLLIS and TREVOR BLEWITT, and

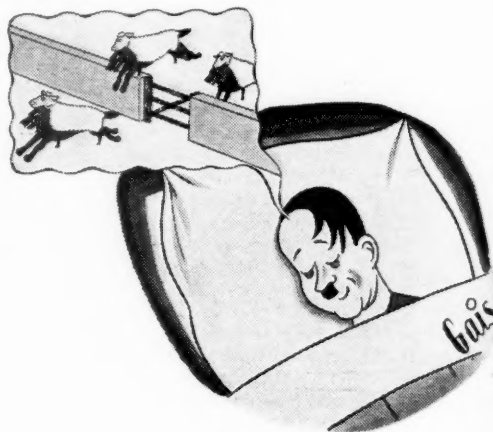
prefaced by a brief but generous appreciation from the pen of M. JEAN GIRAUDOUX, which is a model of Gallic grace, lucidity and acute criticism.

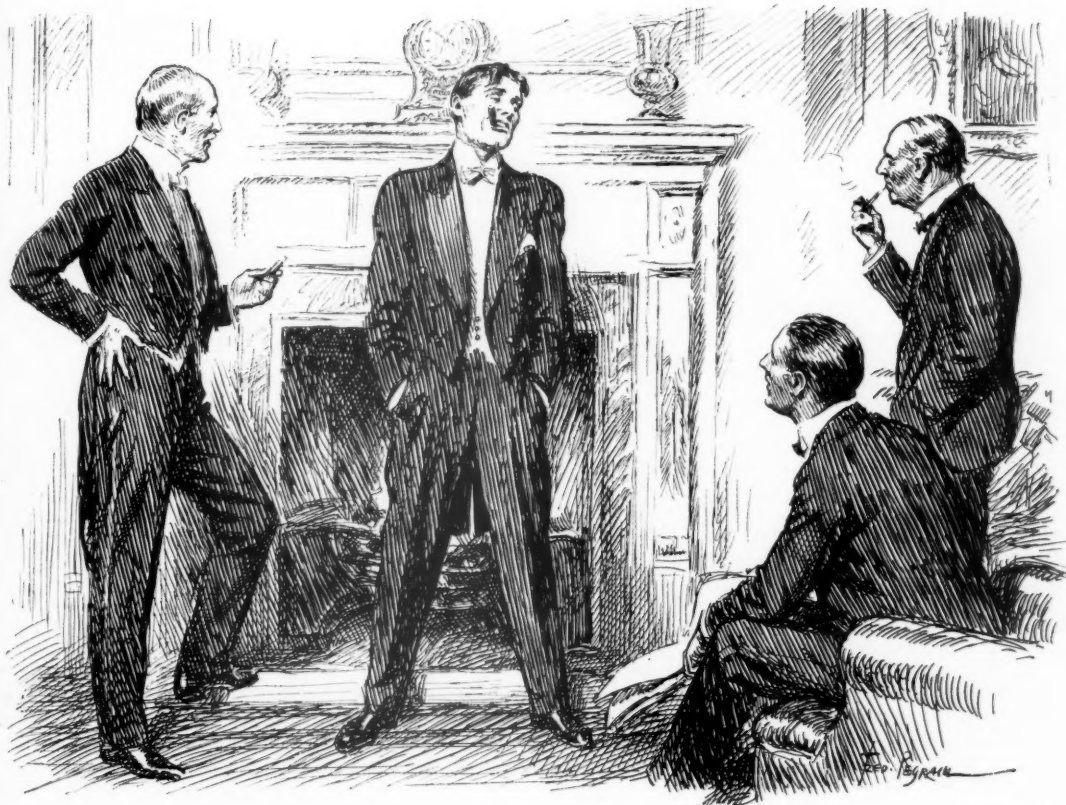
The Fur-Lined North

Those who like a good straight story of adventure as well as those who like to suffer vicariously the indignities of extreme cold and discomfort should get *White Master* (ROUTLEDGE, 7/6), by Mr. ROBERT FLAHERTY. This is the Mr. FLAHERTY who makes films, and the sense of character and lively appreciation of scenery which went into *Man of Aran* and *Nanook of the North* are evident in this novel of life in the service of the Hudson Bay Company in the last century. It was not only an appallingly tough life in itself, but lack of communications and the vast distances to be covered encouraged the Chief Factor to be more or less a dictator, safe in his job so long as he kept up the turnover of furs. Old *MacWhirter* was that, and a sadist as well; and when young *John Kendall*, full of zeal for the Company, got on his wrong side it meant banishment to such ghastly blizzard-ridden corners that *Kendall* finally dragged himself back full of a crazy hunger for revenge. The story is simple but exceedingly dramatic, and the descriptions of the North are very fine. Mr. FLAHERTY is a seasoned explorer, and he gets his experience across.

An Elder Sportsman

Few men have had so varied a career or met so many persons of renown as Mr. C. B. FRY, whose *Life Worth Living* is published by EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE for the modest sum of 12/6. Haled before the Vice-Chancellor's Court at Oxford (some time in the naughty 'nineties) for climbing a lamp-post in the High and turning out the gas, he was asked whether he was not Senior Scholar of his college, Captain of the University Cricket and Football Clubs, President of the Athletic Club, and a First Class in Classical Moderations. He admitted all these accusations and was fined £2 7s. 6d., or in default a fortnight's imprisonment. He reminds elderly readers of many things—how he was a contemporary at Wadham of F. E. SMITH, JOHN SIMON and A. A. ROCHE; how he was originally a fast bowler and, indeed, was played as such for the Gentlemen at Lord's; how he narrowly escaped getting yet another Blue for Rugby football. But games were far from being everything in the career of our Admirable Crichton. Did he not found and carry to success the *Mercury* training





"WAAL, IT'S THIS WAY. WE AMURRICANS DON'T TAKE NO SIDES—WE'RE AB-SO-LOOTELY NOOTRAL. WE DON' GIVE A ROW O' BEANS WHICH OF YOU KNOCKS THE KAISER OUT."

Fred Pegram, November 18th, 1914

ship—the best thing that ever came out of cricket, as the late Bishop of WINCHESTER asserted? And then he has met almost everyone of note in his time, from PAUL KRUGER to ADOLF HITLER. The late Jam of NAWANAGAR, better known to most of us as RANJITSINHJI, was his intimate friend, and through him he came to be an authority on the native States of India, and was on the Indian Delegation at Geneva in the early days of the League of Nations. There, he tells us, he wrote the speech that turned MUSSOLINI out of Corfu and became one of several Englishmen who might, with luck, have been King of Albania and, he maintains, not so easily evicted as the late unhappy monarch. His account of the preliminary interview for this post with a black-bearded bishop is one of the most amusing passages in a thoroughly amusing book.

Not So Long Ago

As we have a right to expect in a novel by Mr. PATRICK CHALMERS, his *Prior's Mead* (METHUEN, 7/6) gives a very pleasant and intimate view of English country life. The district is not exactly defined but it is one where there are shooting and hunting and there is a trout stream within driving distance. It is one moreover with people who are not noticeably wealthy but are comfortably situated and, indeed, appear to be able to live uncommonly well on incomes which, when the figures are given, seem in these difficult times to be surprisingly modest. But the times are of course not those of the immediate present, and the story of the London business girl who suddenly inherits from an uncle whom she hardly knows, money, a manor,

horses and servants, offers a pleasantly distracting picture. And it is presented so vividly that one hesitates to entertain doubts as to whether the young lady's consistent luck as an heiress, as a horsewoman, as an altruist and as an object of love is not a bit too good to be true. But she is so attractive that nobody would wish her to come through less happily than she does.

Steamboat Sailor

Although Mr. NILS FREDRICSON, who describes twelve years of his seafaring life under the title *Endless Voyage* (HARRAP, 8/6), put in eight months in a Baltic barquentine, he is primarily a steamboat sailor. His book deals readably and intelligently with life in the forecastles of tramp steamers up and down the world, and with the seaman's brief glimpses of the solid earth to which he is still largely a stranger. One notes, indeed, in Mr. FREDRICSON's narrative a similarity in essentials to those of most seafarers since the days of *Crusoe* and earlier—more particularly concerning the transition from the romantic visions of boyhood to the knowledge of the hard and sordid aspects of the sailor's life, and the resolve, so often made and so seldom fulfilled, to "quit the sea" at the first opportunity. The view is sometimes expressed nowadays that adventure has no place in the modern seaman's life, at least in time of peace. Mr. FREDRICSON's experience goes to confute the theory, for it includes plenty of incidents as strange as most fiction. It is gratifying to note his remark that "England is spoken of as home by many Scandinavian sailors, who even prefer it to their own countries."

The Promotion of Mrs. Miniver

The promotion of dear little *Mrs. Miniver* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6) to book-form will delight many people, for few of us really have room to keep a file of *The Times*, and yet Miss JAN STRUTHER's sketches so well reflect what might be called the common mind—though naturally it is nothing of the sort—of the woman readers of "*The Thunderer*" that they are of more than passing interest. *Mrs. Miniver* has her endearing weaknesses too—for instance, her misery during the last few minutes before arriving at strange houses, her hatred of parting with an old car—but she confesses them with wit and charm, besides making us

pleasantly familiar with her family, friends and home. In her last chapter she has something to say about the things that it has needed this war to teach us and that no peace must make us forget, which are very well worth saying. The book is charmingly got up in a flowered cover with a box of its own to travel in which will make it an ideal Christmas present.

A Human Magpie

In due course it may be presumed that Miss PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR's energetic investigator, *Asey Mayo*, will have cleared all malefactors from Cape Cod, and in *Spring Harrowing* (COLLINS, 7/6) he is to be found continuing his purge. On this occasion his task was to find the murderer of *Bert Paget*, whose house was cluttered up with collections of all shapes, values, and sizes. But although *Asey's* job was no easy one and he carried it out quickly and without fuss, the story is not one of Miss TAYLOR's happiest efforts, because several of the people mixed up in one way or another with *Paget's* death never seem to shake themselves free from their creator's strings. *Asey*, however, uncontrolled by officials and unconscious of physical fatigue, sees to it that the guilty suffer for their crimes.

The Old Geyser

Admirers of the combined work of Mr. GEORGE GOODCHILD and Mr. BECHHOFFER ROBERTS may find themselves wondering whether these collaborators are in quite their best form in *We Shot an Arrow* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6). Some of their humour, indeed, is perilously akin to facetiousness. Nevertheless their tale of two politicians who were—at different times let it be said—found dead in the same bathroom goes with a swing in an atmosphere which, if somewhat moist from the frequent potations of all and sundry, is always bright and sometimes merry. This tale is not, one feels, the most spontaneous of these authors' efforts, but it shows a keen knowledge of the newspaper world and some of its incidents are described graphically enough.

"His hands tightened on her shoulders and he placed her carefully on her own side of the taxi. Very carefully as if she were a doll that might break or a package of dynamite that might explode."—*Glamour*.

Or a case of Breach of Promise?



"I must ring off now, darling. I think someone else wants to use the phone."

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